Zuva'Sai

! Attention !

This Hero Book contains many secrets that should not be revealed until it is time.

Do not read any of the entries within unless you have been instructed to do so!

When you do read an entry, you may either read the contents aloud to the other players or keep them to yourself.

See "Reading Your Hero Book" on p. 26 of the Rules Reference for instructions on how to use this book.

Zuva'Sai's vision

"You seek the staff of Bekora, a holy object made before the Thalassocracy of Zheebul, before the Creators and the pursuit of prosperity.

It can be a powerful tool for you to free the enslaved korallians from the yoke of the Creators. Or you can use it to become incredibly wealthy and the most powerful Creator yourself. That is for you to decide, but without all the pieces of the staff, it is all for naught.

Look for another piece with the korallians in Runedale's Northgate District. Alas, the Creator from whom you took the piece of the staff is allied with forces more powerful than you know, so be careful.

But above all, you must now become a Keeper of the Breach."

Gain Item card 127 "Conch of Bekora ★☆☆".

Level 1 • The Korallians In The Workhouse

Runedale is a nihteegri city and has small communities of other larva peoples as well, but you see very few korallians walking the streets. No wonder, you think, as this is an inland city with only a river running through it. You only see two prominent korallians here: a Warlock of the Second Circle of the Council of Eight and another who is the barkeeper at The Pit. But you are not looking for either of them.

There is a "dry", living and working in one of the big workhouses in the slums of the Northgate District. Not wanting to march right in, you first survey the building from the shadows. The dry korallians rarely leave the wooden house except to unload the carts which bring snakeroot mushrooms and empty jars, and then to take the jars out again after they have presumably been filled inside the workhouse. Work goes on day and night with the korallians sleeping in shifts.

They are clearly smacks working for a Creator, but you never get a glimpse of that person. Can a dry korallian be a Creator? One who gives others jobs and meaning so that his success may flow down on all the rest? Not likely. Nevertheless, they must know something of the Staff of Bekora.

You approach some of them outside the workhouse and try to probe their mind. If they think you are one of them, perhaps they will tell you everything.

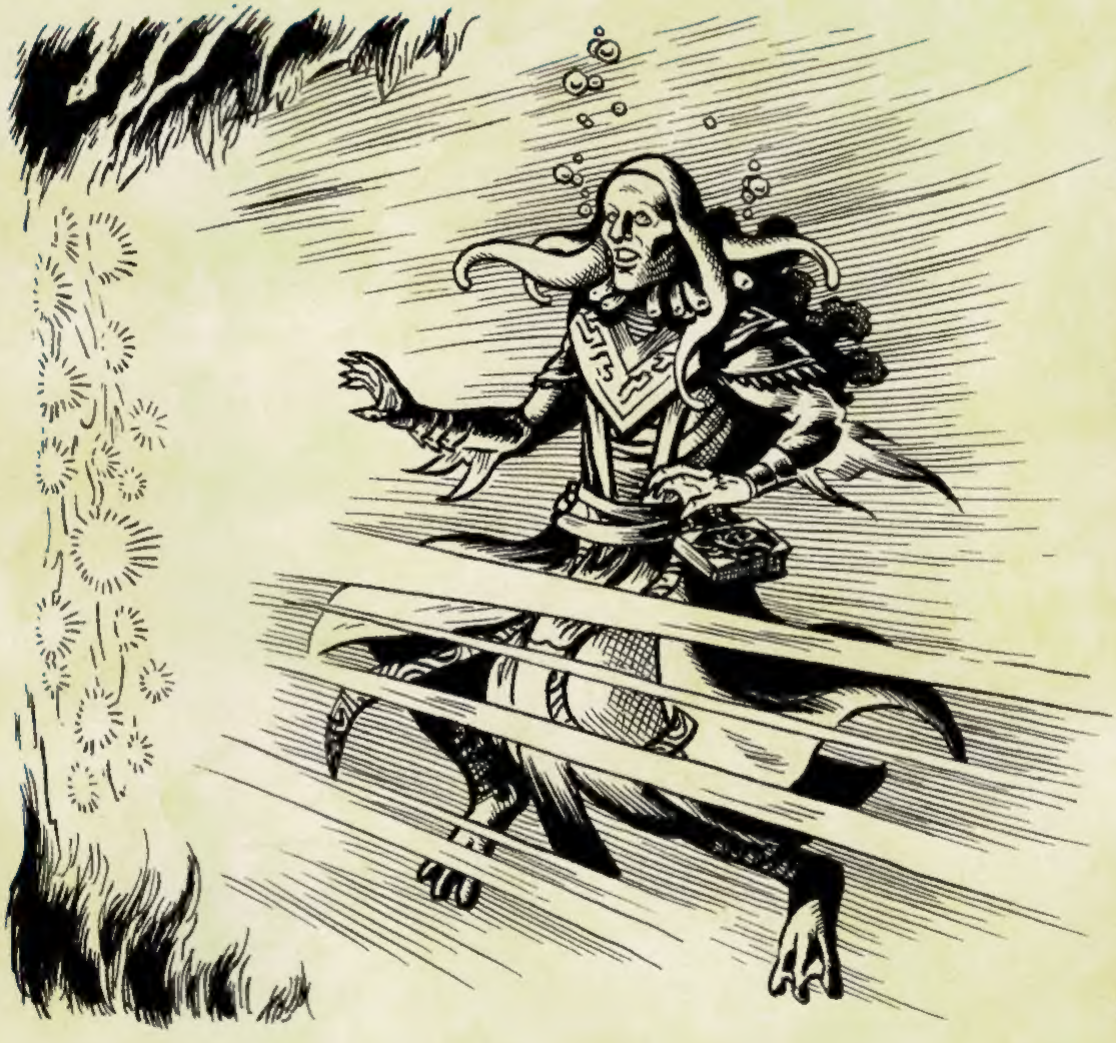
6 +2

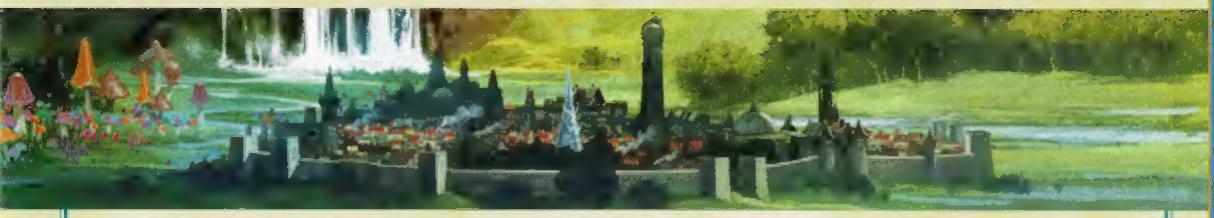
SUCCESS » 26 | FAIL » 17

City Activities • Level 1

» **Once per City step** » *Dive for sunken treasure in the river.* » 16

» **Once only** » *Investigate Mr. Mudoc.* » 09





Level 2 • The House Of Mr. Mudoc

You routinely sneak out of the workhouse to spy on Mr. Mudoc. The fat nihteegri merchant lives with his family and servants in a beautiful stone house in the Secular Bank near Cadfael Fortress.

Staking out his home, you soon know when he goes to sleep and where his bedroom is located. Conveniently, he sleeps next to the outer wall. Perhaps you could use your mental prowess at night from the outside to enter his mind? It is not something you have tried before, but it might work.

You return to the workhouse to keep up your pretense, working in the toxic fumes, and after your shift, you leave again under the cover of night. The district around the workhouse is full of muggers, prostitutes, and the homeless, but the guards keep them away from the Secular and Exalted Banks. The city guards try to question you, too, but a quick psionic trick gets you out of that.

Soon enough you lean against a wall, separated from Mr. Mudoc's head by a block of stone and a pillow. You concentrate and feel your mind wander away from your body. Mr. Mudoc is asleep; you can sense his mind. You start probing to find out where he keeps the Staff of Bekora.

Curiously, it seems he does indeed have psionic powers, but they are not from Bekora. This is something else. And that something stirs as you probe. It reacts.

7 +2 **(if you have "Mudoc Surveillance" in your Hero Journal +2)**
SUCCESS » 15 | FAIL » 03

City Activities · Level 2

» **Once per City step** » *Dive for sunken treasure in the river.* » **16**

» **Once at this level** » *Sell snakeroot powder to the Pit: dangerous, but lucrative.* » **04**

» **Once at this level** » *Use your psionic powers to make a profit.* » **28**

Level 3 · The Curious Korallian

Back in the workhouse with the dry korallians, you realize Mr. Mudoc was a red herring. He does not hold what you are looking for, although he seems to have taken advantage of the smacks just as any proper Creator would.

Should you feel sorry for your fellow korallians? No, certainly not! These wretched smacks must know about the second piece of the Staff of Bekora, and one of them could have used it to fight off Mr. Mudoc. They have the right to pursue prosperity, the same as everyone else.

Since they have not done that, they should at least tell you all they know about the staff, but how do you make them open up?

Choose one:

A: *Read the minds of the smacks.* » 14

B: *Befriend the smacks.* » 02

C: Spend 5 » *Bribe the smacks.* » 20

City Activities · Level 3

» **Once per City step** » *Dive for sunken treasure in the river.* » 16

» **Once at this level** » *Sell snakeroot powder to the Pit: dangerous, but lucrative.* » 04

» **Once only** » **"Listening Conch" in your Party Journal** » *Investigate the listening conch.* » 24

Level 4 • Ssulen'n

You know the Jade Tendril has the piece you need for the Staff of Bekora, and that Ssulen'n, Warlock of the Second Circle, might know where it is.

You approach the Tower of the White Circle where the Council of Eight holds its headquarters. An Acolyte of the Circle leads you to Ssulen'n.

"May you work hard," he says in the korallian way.

"Work hard and prosper," you reply, following custom.

He has a rather large swimming pool in his office, full of sea water. He asks you to join him there. It has been too long since you swam in the sea and this feels very nice.

With no use in beating around the bush, you tell him you seek the Staff of Bekora.

"I have been watching you for quite some time," he says haughtily, "and I have already seen you wielding the Conch of Bekora to boost your power, but what will you use that power for?"

He must be testing you. "I would protect the equal right of all korallians to pursue prosperity," you tell him.

"That is a cliché," he replies. "Do you believe it? Do the smacks at your workhouse have that right?"

You nod. The plankton in the water dances with your movement.

"Then, why don't they?"

"They are the mind-controlled slaves of Mr. Mudoc."

"Doesn't sound like they have much rights at all," he scoffs.

You are taken aback. He sounds like a parasite, like one of those who would question the Creators.

"Listen," he says, "you do something for me, I'll do something for you. That's a fair bargain, right? Right. A korallian has been captured by the sailors of Bekora's Hoist and they intend to sell him into slavery. We must free him. Will you help me?"

"Why would the sailors capture someone?" you ask. And then you realize. "He was a pirate."

Ssulen'n shuts his gills in a gesture meaning a grudging yes. "But I love him."

Pirates are parasites who stand against everything you have been taught. Against the Creators, protection of property, and the Pledge of Prosperity itself. But if you do not help the parasite, Ssulen'n will not tell you where to find the Staff of Bekora.

Choose one:

A: "Ssulen'n's Secret" in your Hero Journal » *Blackmail Ssulen'n.* » 01

B: *Agree to free the parasite pirate.* » 18

C: *Appeal to Ssulen'n's korallian principles to stop this madness.* » 29

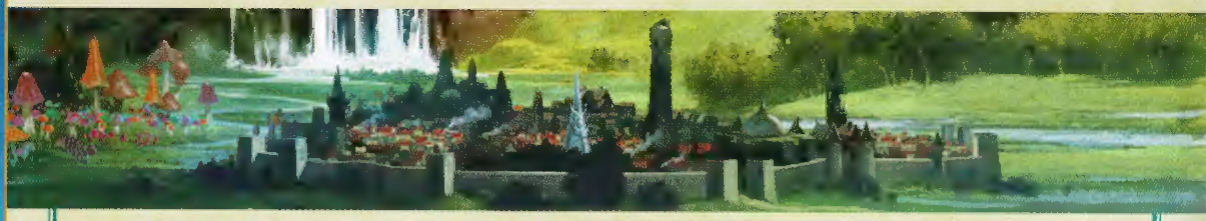
D: *Extend all your power to telepathically dominate Ssulen'n, Warlock of the Second Circle.* » 23

City Activities · Level 4

» **Once per City step** » *Dive for sunken treasure in the river.* » 16

» **Once at this level** » *Sell snakeroot powder to the Pit: dangerous, but lucrative.* » 04

» **Once at this level** » *Use your psionic powers to make a profit.* » 28



Level 5 · Return To The Workhouse

Since you found out where the Staff of Bekora was located, you had no need to return to the workhouse. Now you do it one last time. You know Mr. Mudoc is there and want to meet him eye to eye.

When you enter the workhouse, the fat nihteegri senses your presence and turns around. He was whipping some of the smaller smacks, but now drops his whip to take care of you. He tries to subjugate you with his simbiont's psionic powers, but with your mental strength increased, you stop his attack with ease.

He is at your mercy, and so is everyone else in the workhouse.

Choose one:

A: *Destroy Mr. Mudoc and liberate the dry Korallians from the Workhouse.* » 11

B: *Destroy Mr. Mudoc and make the smacks work for you instead.* » 05

C: *Threaten Mr. Mudoc and make a deal with him, leaving the korallians workers his slaves.* » 22

City Activities · Level 5

» **Once per City step** » *Dive for sunken treasure in the river.* » 16

» **Once only** » **"Grateful Smacks" in your Hero Journal** » *Visit the grateful smacks.* » 13

» **Once only** » **"Mushroom Tycoon" in your Hero Journal** » *Gather your profits.* » 21

Story Entries

01 "You Better Do As I Tell You..."

You tell Ssulen'n you know all about his dealings with the pirates and how he spies on Bekura's Hoist.

"So what?" he asks, nervously.

"Is Essylit aware of your true loyalties?"

That strikes a nerve. "Alright, fine," he says. "Keep your mouth shut and I'll tell you what you need to know."

Gain 1 to use in this City step.

» 06

02 Friendly Wretches

While you make the snakeroot powder with the smacks, you chat with them, slowly getting to know them. Most of them grew up here, first as larvae in the nearby river, and then later in dirty pools of stagnant water. From the pools they were brought here by Mr. Mudoc without a chance to take tests to become anything other than smacks.

Others have different stories, having arrived here from somewhere else. One of them, an older woman called Lussor, came from your home town of Sinkerton, long ago, and has stories of her life as an officer of the Trident. Lussor is a smack now though and has been for many years.

You realize she might have the information you need to know, but she is weakened by a cursed choker she cannot get rid of. You offer to help, but as you try to pry open the latch, the choker tries to attach itself to your neck, instead. You try to fight it, but it manages to drain your strength before you manage to disable it.

Stronger now, and thankful, she tells you of another magic item she once had...

Gain an Injury card.

» 07

03 Mr. Mudoc Retaliates

Mr. Mudoc fights off your psionic attack and retaliates!

Your powers are not quite as strong as Mr. Mudoc's. If you already had the second piece of the Staff of Bekora, things would be quite different...

4

04 A Snakeroot Salesman

You approach the Pit with your snakeroot powder. You organize an audience with Madame Yaz'zu's poison maker and apothecarist, the bald and neatly bearded Walon the White.

He methodically examines the snakeroot and agree that it is reasonably pure, but the price he suggests is much too low, not even covering your costs. You will have to haggle.

with The Shroud » 25

Otherwise, ? +2 (if you have the Toxicology profession +1)

4 or fewer » 19

5-6 » 10

7 or more » 25

05 Subjugating the Korallians

You force Mr. Mudoc to give the workhouse to you. With your increased psionic powers, you take control of the weak-willed smacks. You are now the Creator of this workhouse, making this your first step in forging a powerful business empire of your own.

The first thing you do is make them swear the pledge of prosperity every morning, just like back home in Sinkerton:

"I give my head and heart to the Creators and thank them for giving us jobs and meaning. Our most sacred and undeniable truth is that all korallians have equal rights to pursue prosperity. I solemnly swear hard work and genius shall always be justly rewarded, parasites harshly punished, and property firmly protected. May Bekora bless the Creators and may their success flow down on us all."

Write "Mushroom Tycoon" in your Hero Journal. Gain 10 .

06 The Location

Ssulen'n finally tells you where the piece of the Staff of Bekora is located.

"It is here. I have it. I took it from the workhouse lest it falls into Mr. Mudoc's hands, or worse."

"What would you consider worse?" you ask, but then you realize. "Into the hands of Essylit the Unerring!"

Ssulen'n shuts his gills slowly.

"But now it belongs to you," he says, and opens a chest in his office. From the chest, you lift the crustaceous handle of the legendary staff.

Replace Item card 127 "Conch of Bekora ★☆☆" with Item card 128 "Wand of Bekora ★★☆".

07 The Secret Of The Smacks

"Yes, once, many years ago, we did have a holy rod, a relic from the old country. That was before Mr. Mudoc and before the workhouse. How horrible life was then, no safety and no purpose; just like in the old country. The rod was lost at some point, but in the end we were fortunate as Mr. Mudoc came to our aid and gave us purpose again."

The rod must be a part of the Staff of Bekora. Finally, you are on the right track!

"Can you tell me any more about the rod?" you ask.

"You're not the first one to ask," she says. "A proud young warlock came asking about it, too, but I didn't tell her anything."

"A korallian warlock?" you ask, and she nods. "But where is the rod?"

"I don't know, but I think the warlock does."

Gain an Achievement gem ◆.

08 The Workhouse

Once in the workhouse, milking the snakeroots of their poison, you find out their boss is not a Creator, nor even a korallian. They work for a nihteegri potion merchant called Mr. Mudoc. He has some sort of telepathic hold on these smacks, which might mean he has a piece of the Staff of Bekora!

09 Espionage

You ask about Mr. Mudoc at the Amethyst Order, at trader's guilds, and in taverns. Even though the smacks cannot tell you much about him, he does have other business partners in Runedale. You soon find out that he sells the snakeroot powder to an alchemist at the Round Market, who his daughter's tutor is, and that his wife's family comes from Starhaven. You know quite enough to pay him a little visit later on...

Write "Mudoc Surveillance" in your Hero Journal.

10 A Fair Price

Walon the White ponders your arguments and agrees that he can pay you what you ask.

Gain 4 .

11 Liberating the Korallians

You force Mr. Mudoc to sign a deed saying the korallian workers now own their own workhouse and get to keep the profits from the snakeroot powder. The smacks, no longer under telepathic control, start to organize their own chain of command. Grateful, they promise to help you whenever they see you.

Write "Grateful Smacks" in your Hero Journal.
Gain an Inspiration gem .

12 Ssulen'n Does Not Submit

You are powerful, but so is he. You do not manage to penetrate his mind. Instead, you feel a sharp pain in your head.

"You would be wise not to try that again," he says.

Lose 5 .

Choose one:

A: "Ssulen'n's Secret" in your Hero Journal » *Blackmail Ssulen'n.* **» 01**

B: *Agree to free the parasite pirate.* **» 18**

C: *Appeal to Ssulen'n's korallian principles to stop this madness.* **» 29**

13 The Liberator Visits

You pay a visit to the workhouse where the smacks are busy working, but not governed by a boss or a creator. They do not swear allegiance to the Pledge of Prosperity like in other korallian companies; they have chosen their own bosses and even the lowest smack gets a cut of the profits.

Strange, very strange; it can never work.

Yet, they are very happy and grateful and cheer you when you walk through the workhouse.

6 +2

SUCCESS » Gain an Inspiration gem.

FAIL » Gain an Achievement gem.

14 Brainwashed Wretches

As the smacks are already telepathically controlled by Mr. Mudoc, there is no harm in you doing your own psionic attacks on them. Besides, who cares for the privacy of a few smacks when one can change the destiny of all korallians?

One by one you probe the minds of the others in the workhouse. It is easy at first, but doing it so much really takes its toll. You find out about their failed tests, wanton ambitions, secret affairs, forbidden emotions, unnatural lust, suppressed anger, and near forgotten memories. After a while you begin to feel like you know them too well and it is difficult to look them in the eye anymore.

Eventually, when you are nearly exhausted, the work bears fruit and you discover an old woman with just the memories you were looking for. You hear her voice in your head.

4

» 07

15 Mr. Mudoc's Secret

While escaping, you see in your mind a powerful psionic parasite living inside Mr. Mudoc's fat belly. That is what is giving him his powers. Obviously, it could not be removed without killing both.

You realize your powers are not quite as strong as Mr. Mudoc's. If you already had the second piece of the Staff of Bekora, things would be quite different...

Gain an Achievement gem .

16 Diving for Treasure

The river is dirty, but rumors say it is full of sunken ships...

Roll a Counter die and consult the following table:

0-1 » *You are attacked by a huge ugly fish.* 3

2-3 » *You get some dirty water in your gills, but you find a coin.* **Gain 1** .

4-6 » *You find a mushroom growing on an old plank.* **Gain** .

7-8 » *You find some valuable metal.* **Gain** .

9-10 » *You find a precious glowing trinket.* **Gain** .

» *You find a magical potion.* **Gain Item card 031 "Potion of Stamina".**

17 Stubborn Smacks!

Their minds are harder to influence than you thought. They assume you are from one of the gangs in Runedale, come to rob them.

"Are you with the Razor Vespirs? With the Sable Crown? We ain't giving nothing to you parasites! We are loyal to our patron!"

They attack you with surprising clarity and strength.

"Stop!" one of them yells. "There's no korallians in the gangs!"

The others realize this is true and ask you your business. When you tell them you want to work, they take you in.

3

» 08

18 Help the Parasites

You agree to help free Ssulen'n's parasite boyfriend. With your combined powers in hydromancy and telepathy, it is easy enough, although you do still take some blows.

As you see the two embrace you are reminded of Melussa, the parasite you met in Sinkerton. Perhaps the parasites are not all wrong? Maybe not everyone can pursue prosperity equally because most property is owned by the Creators in Sinkerton and by the nobility here in Benem.

This is food for thought, indeed.

4

Your party may gain +1 Reputation with the Council of Eight.

» 06

19 Bad at Haggling

Walon the White rings a bell and two goons appear out of nowhere.

"I need you to listen to me," he says. "I'm not going to squabble with an errand boy like you."

The goons beat you up and throw you out, but the snakeroot powder remains inside.

3

20 Greedy Wretches

You realize that the only one worth questioning is an old woman called Lussor. At first, you ask her directly about the Staff of Bekora, but she does not want to help you. It does not seem she is under psionic commands not to help, but maybe she does not trust you. Or maybe she would rather look after her own interests, which you can understand of course.

Someone tells you she came to Runedale from somewhere else, so perhaps she still remembers some of the ways of the true Korallians. Perhaps she would like to pursue some prosperity.

"Would some metal help you remember better?" you ask.

"If it is shiny enough," she says.

After five stars has changed hands she focuses on your question and does indeed remember something.

» 07

21 The Creator Visits

You make a surprise visit to the workhouse to make sure the smacks are not slacking off or stealing profits.

They look at you nervously as you choose some at random to have their minds read. None of them have dared disobey.

One of them brings you the profits earned since your last visit.

7 +2

SUCCESS » Gain 8 . | FAIL » Gain 3 .

22 A Deal with Mr. Mudoc

Mr. Mudoc realizes he is no match for you. You threaten him with taking over the workhouse or, even worse, giving it to the smacks. He falls to his knees, begging for mercy. "Please! I have a family to feed! This is my life's work, don't take it away from me. I'll make it worth your while! You don't need to trouble yourself with the day-to-day, just take the profit I have earned!"

Mr. Mudoc pays you with rare valuables and you leave him to deal with the smacks.

Gain Item cards 047 "Scroll of Summoning" and 039 "Draught of Veils"

23 Submit!

You stop speaking underwater and instead reach out to Ssulen'n psionically. You are used to penetrating minds fairly easily, but his is the mind of a trained Warlock of the Council of Eight.

7 +2

SUCCESS » 27 | FAIL » 12

24 The Conch

You revisit the conch you found at Anglers' Pier. You compare it with the Conch of Bekora, but it is quite different. You press it against your ear hole and can hear something, or someone. This magical seashell is meant for spying on people from a distance.

Since it was at the the pier dedicated to Bekora's Hoist, they must be the target of the espionage, but who is the spy?

You do some digging and find out that this type of device is typically made by the pirates of Shiver Retreat and requires a second conch at the other end. You listen to it closely and hear the sounds of a korallian drawing breath through its gills.

There are only two korallians in Runedale who might own the other side: Madame Yaz'zu at the Pit and Warlock of the Second Circle Ssulen'n from the Council of Eight. After realizing that, it is easy to figure out the magical signal is coming from the Tower of the White Circle, indicating Ssulen'n.

Is he secretly working for the Shiver Retreat? Does Essylit the Unerring know about this?

Write "Ssulen'n's Secret" in your Hero Journal.

25 Snakeroot Legend

Walon the White weighs the bag of snakeroot powder in his hand and looks at you quizzically.

"Who on Agemonia are you?"

"You know," you tell him. "You know exactly who I am. Say my name."

His face drops a little as he realizes. "You're Zuva'Sai."

"You're godsdamn right."

A little intimidated by your reputation, he apologizes and agrees to pay you more than you asked.

Gain 7 ✪.

26 Inside the Workhouse

Their minds are harder to penetrate than you thought, but still you manage to do it. It is almost as if they had already been psionically tampered with.

But once you are in, you make them believe you are their old friend and co-worker and that they owe you your overdue wages.

Gain 3 ✪.
» 📖 **08**

27 Ssulen'n Submits

He may be powerful, but he is not Zuva'Sai. You manage to penetrate his mind!

"Tell me where the Staff is!" you order him.

"I will tell you," he replies.

» 📖 **06**

28 Telepathic Capitalism

Many people in the south know better than to haggle with korallians since you always send the telepaths to the negotiating table. But here in the north, many have not yet caught on.

You can buy goods for the lowest price the seller is willing to accept and you can then sell them for the highest price the buyer is willing to offer.

This is a nice way to make some money without getting your hands dirty.

💬? 🎲 +2 ✪
4 or fewer ✪ » **Gain 2** ✪.
5-6 ✪ » **Gain 4** ✪.
7 or more ✪ » **Gain 8** ✪.

29 The Pledge of Prosperity

"Remember," you tell Ssulen'n, "every day is another test."

"That is what they teach us," he replies, "but it need not be like that."

"Strive to know your place in this life and you will fare better in the next one."

"You are just repeating religious platitudes."

"Religion is the medicine of the people."

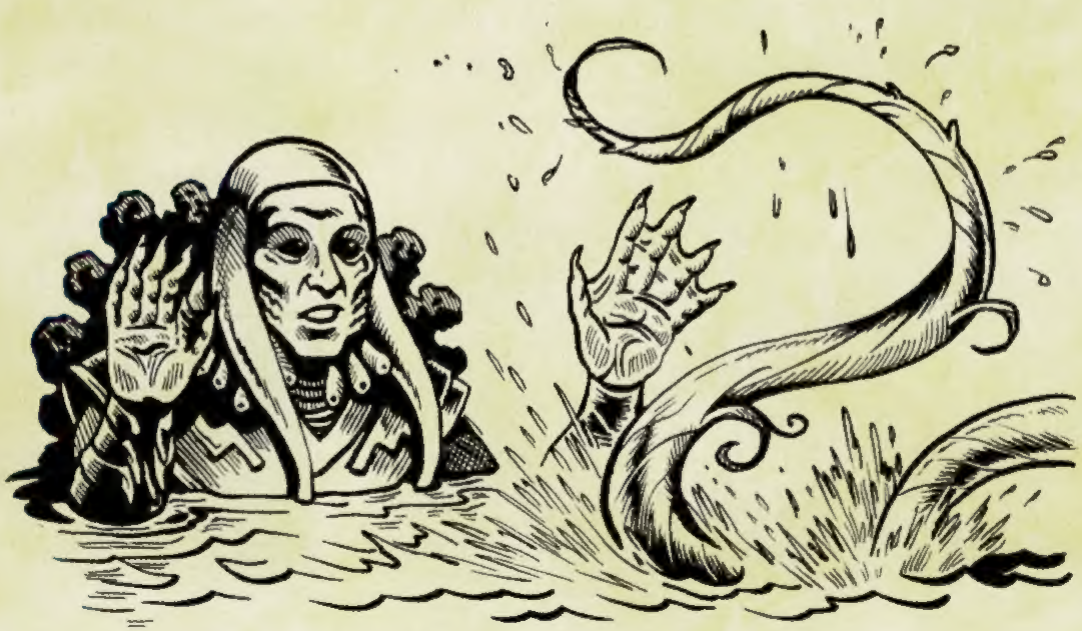
"My lover says it was all invented by the Creators to stop smacks from rebelling."

"What does your heart tell you?"

He stops for a moment, drawing in plenty of water through his gills. "That I must not abandon everything our people believe in. Perhaps I could still become a Creator, myself."

"That's right!" you say. "A powerful warlock should not have a hard time creating jobs and meaning to smacks!"

"Thank you, Zuva'Sai," he says. "You have prevented me from making a terrible mistake. Now, I will help you."

Your party may gain +1 Reputation with the Council of Eight.

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